

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2856

C O N F I D E N T I A L LAGOS 0593

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, NI

SUBJ: VISIT OF UNDER SECRETARY ROBINSON

REF : 75 STATE 295369

1. IN CONVERSATION WITH DIRECTOR OF MEA AMERICAS DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR UCHUNO JANUARY 14 DCM RAISED SUBJECT OF ROBINSON VISIT AND ASKED IF UCHUNO COULD SAY WHETHER THE SUGGESTED TIMING FEBRUARY 16-18 IS CONVENIENT. UCHUNO RESPONDED THAT "THERE HAVE BEEN A GREAT MANY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS" AND IT IS HARD TO SAY, BUT HE AND MEA ARE MOVING AHEAD WITH PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT ON THE ASSUMPTION THAT IT WILL BE O.K. DCM GAVE UCHUNO NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON ROBINSON AND TOOK OCCASION TO UNDERSCORE LATTER'S INTEREST IN NEW APPROACHES TO DC/LDC ECONOMIC RELATIONS, HIS IMPORTANCE IN THE FORMULATION OF ECONOMIC POLICY IN WASHINGTON, AND OUR CONVICTION THAT HIS VISIT WOULD BE IN BOTH NIGERIAN AND U.S. INTERESTS.

2. COMMENT: WE WILL CONTINUE TO SEEK CONFIRMATION OF ACCEPTABILITY OF PROPOSED DATES FOR VISIT AND ARE SIMILARLY MOVING AHEAD WITH PREPARATIONS. FEEL OBLIGED, HOWEVER, SOUND NOTE OF WARNING THAT FMG MIGHT POSSIBLY DECIDE POSTPONE ROBINSON VISIT IN WAKE OF OAU SUMMIT (LAGOS 553) AND IN LIGHT OF FMG PROTEST AGAINST U.S. TACTICS ON ANGOLAN QUESTION. WE NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT HEAD OF STATE MUHAMMED'S STATEMENT ON RETURN FROM OAU WAS ENCOURAGINLY CONCILIATORY AND SOUGHT TO PUT BEST FACE ON SITUATION, FACT WHICH GIVES GOOD GROUNDS FOR HOPE THAT ISSUE WILL NOT BE FURTHER EXACERBATED AND ROBINSON'S
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VISIT CAN GO AS PLANNED.

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